

Date Mailed  
July 24, 2001

BEFORE THE  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WISCONSIN

Application of Northern States Power Company, Wisconsin,  
for a Certificate of Authority to Construct Facilities and Provide  
Natural Gas Service in the Town of Barre and a Portion of the  
Town of Greenfield, La Crosse County, Wisconsin

4220-CG-132

**NOTICE OF PROCEEDING,  
ASSESSMENT OF COSTS AND  
PREHEARING CONFERENCE**

<b>Prehearing Conference Date:</b>	<b>Wednesday August 8, 2001 – 10:00 a.m.</b>
<b>Conference Location:</b>	<b>Public Service Commission, 610 North Whitney Way, Madison, WI</b>

**THIS IS A PROCEEDING** to consider the May 23, 2001, application of Northern States Power Company, Wisconsin (NSPW) for authority under Wis. Stats. §§ 196.49 and 196.50 and Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 133.03 to provide natural gas utility service in the towns of Barre and Greenfield, La Crosse County, Wisconsin.

NSPW is a public utility as defined in Wis. Stat. § 196.01(5)(a), with its principal office at 1414 Hamilton Ave., Eau Claire, Wisconsin. NSPW is engaged in the business of distributing and selling natural gas to approximately 82,000 customers in 69 communities located in eleven counties in Wisconsin and two counties in Upper Michigan.

NSPW has requested authority to provide natural gas service in the town of Barre and in Sections 4, 5, the northeast quarter of the northeast quarter in Section 8, and the northwest and northeast quarters of the northwest quarter in Section 9 in the town of Greenfield. The areas are contiguous with NSPW's service territory in the towns Medary and Shelby, La Crosse County; however, the requested area in the town of Greenfield is currently within an area Midwest Natural Gas, Inc.'s (Midwest) is authorized to serve.

The Commission previously granted Midwest a Certificate of Authority (CA) to serve customers in the town of Greenfield in 1969 with CA-5073. Midwest currently serves customers in the town of Greenfield, but has not extended service to the areas of Greenfield NSPW is requesting to serve.

NSPW states in its application that this is a system improvement project that would reinforce its distribution system in the La Crosse area. The project would allow loads to be shifted to a different town border station that operates at substantially higher pressures than the current town border station. The existing station would either be removed entirely or retained and used for emergency back-up, providing greater system reliability. In addition to providing system reinforcement, NSPW states that it has identified 208 potential residential and 4 potential commercial customers along the proposed route and in adjacent areas.

**NOTICE IS GIVEN** that the Commission considers it necessary, in order to carry out its duties, to investigate all books, accounts, practices, and activities of the applicant. The expenses incurred or to be incurred by the Commission which are reasonably attributable to such an investigation will be assessed against and collected from the applicant in accordance with the provisions of Wis. Stat. § 196.85 and Wis. Admin. Code ch. PSC 5.

This is a Type III action under Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 4.10(3). No unusual circumstances have come to the attention of the Commission which indicate that significant environmental consequences are likely. Neither an environmental impact statement under Wis. Stat. 1.11 nor an environmental assessment is required.

The Commission does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the provision of programs, services, or employment. Any person with a disability who needs accommodations to participate in this proceeding or who needs to obtain this document in a different format should contact the docket coordinator listed below.

The Commission will hold a prehearing conference on Wednesday, August 8, 2001, at 10:00 a.m. in the Flambeau River (Commission Conference Room) at the Public Service Commission Building, 610 North Whitney Way, Madison, Wisconsin, and continuing at times to be set by the presiding Administrative Law Judge. This building is accessible to people in wheelchairs through the Whitney Way first floor (lobby) entrance. Parking for people with disabilities is available on the south side of the building. Any person with a disability who needs additional accommodations should contact the case coordinator listed below.

Because NSPW's application involves a portion of the town of Greenfield, an area currently authorized to be served by Midwest, Midwest has indicated its intent to contest these portions of NSPW's proposed project. To allow the Commission to fully investigate all options in this case, the applicant is directed to provide information regarding three possible configurations:

- 1) A 4-inch plastic main system improvement project that has a route through the towns of Barre and Greenfield without serving any customers.
- 2) A 4-inch plastic main system improvement project that has a route through the towns of Barre and Greenfield and serves only customers in the town of Barre.

3) A 4-inch plastic main system improvement project that has a route through the towns of Barre and Greenfield and serves the customers in both the towns of Barre and Greenfield.

NSPW is directed to submit information that will permit the Commission to consider each of these three alternative projects on a stand-alone basis.

The Administrative Law Judge shall use the prehearing conference to identify any parties who may propose competing applications for providing service in the town of Barre and establish a schedule for the submission of complete competing applications. If any competing applications are received, the Commission will process them concurrently with the application currently before it, docket 4220-CG-132, and to follow the schedule established at this prehearing.

The prehearing conference is being held to: (1) identify persons who will actively participate as full parties; (2) identify any parties who will be filing applications competing with that of NSPW for providing service in the town of Barre, (3) identify issues; (4) determine the date and time for a hearing; (5) specify dates for filing competing applications, testimony and exhibits; and (6) any other matters that will facilitate the hearing.

Parties will be bound by the designation of issues and the schedule adopted at the prehearing conference. Persons who consider themselves to be potential parties should participate in the prehearing conference. Any person desiring to become a party shall file a request pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 227.44(2m) and Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 2.32(3) no later than 10 days from the date of this notice. The request shall be addressed to Administrative Law Judge David C. Whitcomb, Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, P.O. Box 7854, Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7854.

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Questions from the media may be directed to Jeffrey L. Butson, Public Affairs Director at (608) 267-0912.

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Questions regarding this matter may be directed to docket coordinator John R. Vogt at (608) 267-3374.

Dated at Madison, Wisconsin, \_\_\_\_\_

By the Commission:

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Lynda L. Dorr  
Secretary to the Commission

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